Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently amended) A method ~~of detecting stopwords in a query~~ comprising:

identifying a potential stopword in [[the]] a query based on a ~~comparison to a~~ list of stopwords;

generating ~~a plurality of sets~~ a first set of context data based on the query ~~and the potential stopword~~;

generating at least one second set of context data based on a version of the query in which the potential stopword has been removed;

comparing the ~~sets~~ at least one second set of context data to the first set of context data; and

classifying the potential stopword either as an actual stopword or a non-stopword based on the comparing.

2. (Original) The method of claim 1, further comprising:

rewriting the query to remove the actual stopword from the query.

3. (Canceled)

4. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein the comparing ~~the sets of context data~~ includes ~~comparing the sets of context data to one another to determine~~ determining whether ~~various ones of~~ the ~~plurality of sets~~ first set of context data and the at least one second set of context data are substantially similar.

5. (Canceled)

6. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein generating the ~~plurality of sets~~ at least one second set of context data includes:

deriving a plurality of second queries from the query and the potential stopword; and

querying a database using the plurality of second queries.

7. (Original) The method of claim 6, wherein querying the database includes issuing the plurality of second queries to a search engine, and wherein the potential stopword includes a plurality of potential stopwords and the plurality of second queries are derived from combinations of the potential stopwords plus terms in the query that are not potential stopwords.

8. (Currently amended) The method of claim 1, wherein generating the ~~plurality of sets~~ at least one second set of context data includes:

deriving a plurality of second queries from the query and the potential stopword; and

locating categories relevant to the second queries using a category generator.

9. (Original) The method of claim 8, wherein the potential stopword includes a plurality of potential stopwords and plurality of second queries are derived from combinations of the potential stopwords plus terms in the query that are not potential stopwords.

10. (Original) The method of claim 1, wherein the potential stopword includes a stop-phrase.

11. (Currently amended) A method comprising:

identifying potential stopwords in a query;

generating a first set of context data based on the query ~~and the potential stopwords~~;

generating at least one second set of context data based on the query dissociated from one or more of the potential stopwords;

performing a comparison of the at least one second set of context data to the first set of context data;

designating at least one of the potential stopwords as a non-stopword based on the comparison;

designating actual stopwords from among the potential stopwords based on the comparison; and

rewriting the query to remove ~~one or more of~~ the actual stopwords from the query.

12-14. (Canceled)

15. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein generating the at least one second set of context data includes:

deriving a plurality of second queries from the query and the potential stopwords; and

querying a database using the plurality of second queries.

16. (Original) The method of claim 15, wherein the plurality of second queries are derived from combinations of the potential stopwords plus terms in the query that are not potential stopwords.

17. (Currently amended) The method of claim 11, wherein generating the at least one second set of context data includes:

deriving a plurality of second queries from the query and the potential stopwords; and

issuing the plurality of second queries to a category generator to locate categories relevant to the second queries.

18. (Original) The method of claim 17, wherein the plurality of second queries are derived from combinations of the potential stopwords plus terms in the query that are not potential stopwords.

19. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein identifying the potential stopwords includes:

matching terms in the query to a pre-defined list of stopwords.

20. (Original) The method of claim 11, wherein the potential stopwords include potential stopwords and stop-phrases.

21. (Currently amended) A system implemented within one or more computer devices, comprising:

a parser component configured to receive a search query and identify potential stopwords in the search query;

a context generation component to generate a first set of context data based on the search query and at least one second set of context data based on the search query dissociated from one or more of the potential stopwords; and

a comparator component to compare the at least one second set of context data to the first set of context data to determine those of the potential stopwords that are actual stopwords and those of the potential stopwords that are non-stopwords.

22. (Previously presented) The system of claim 21, wherein, when the comparator determines that one or more of the potential stopwords are actual stopwords, the search query is rewritten to a form that does not include the one or more actual stopwords.

23. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the context generation component includes a search engine.

24. (Previously presented) The system of claim 23, wherein the comparator component compares sets of documents returned from the search engine to determine those of the potential stopwords that effect generation of context data that differs from context data unassociated with those potential stopwords.

25. (Original) The system of claim 21, wherein the context generation component includes a category generator configured to locate category lists relevant to a search query.

26. (Previously presented) The system of claim 25, wherein the comparator component compares category lists to one another to determine those of the potential

stopwords that effect generation of context data that differs from context data unassociated with those potential stopwords.

27. (Currently amended) A system implemented within one or more computer devices, comprising:

means for identifying potential stopwords in a query, wherein the potential stopwords include at least one actual stopword;

means for generating context data including a first set of context data based on the query and at least one second set of context data based on the query dissociated from one or more of the potential stopwords;

means for performing a comparison of the at least one second set of context data and the first set of context data;

means for detecting the at least one actual stopword based on the comparison of the at least one second set of context data and the first set of context data; and

means for rewriting the query to remove the at least one actual stopword.

28 and 29. (Canceled)

30. (Currently amended) A computer-readable storage ~~medium~~ device containing computer-executable instructions ~~for causing a processor to perform a method~~, the computer-readable storage ~~medium~~ device comprising:

instructions for identifying potential stopwords in a query;

instructions for retrieving a first set of context data based on the query and at least one second set of context data based on the query dissociated from one or more of the potential stopwords;

instructions for performing a comparison of the at least one second set of context data and the first set of context data;

instructions for classifying the potential stopwords[[,]] as actual stopwords or non-stopwords based on the comparison; and

instructions for rewriting the query to remove the potential stopwords from the query that are that are classified as actual stopwords.

31. (Currently amended) A document retrieval system comprising:

a search engine configured to:

receive a user search query,

receive rewritten versions of the search query that exclude stopwords from the user search query, and

perform a search of a document index based on the user search query and the rewritten versions of the search query; and

a stopword detection component ~~to rewrite the search query, the stopword detection component~~ including:

a parser component configured to receive the user search query and identify potential stopwords in the search query;

a context generation component to generate a first set of context data based on the search query and at least one second set of context data based on the search query dissociated from one or more of the potential stopwords; and

a comparator component to compare the at least one second set of context data and the first set of context data to determine which of the potential stopwords are actual stopwords and which of the potential stopwords are non-stopwords to be included in at least one of the rewritten versions of the search query.

32. (New) A method comprising:

receiving a search query, the search query including a plurality of terms;

identifying one term in the plurality of terms as a potential stopword based on a list of stopwords;

performing a first search using the search query to identify a first group of documents;

performing a second search using the search query with the identified one term removed to identify a second group of documents;

determining whether the first group of documents is substantially similar to the second group of documents;

classifying the identified one term as a stopword when the first group of documents are determined to be substantially similar to the second group of documents; and

classifying the identified one term as a non-stopword when the first group of documents are determined not to be substantially similar to the second group of documents.

33. (New) The method of claim 32, further comprising:

submitting the search query to a search engine when the first group of documents are determined not to be substantially similar to the second group of documents; and

submitting, to the search engine, the search query with the identified one term removed when the first group of documents are determined to be substantially similar to the second group of documents.

34. (New) The method of claim 32, further comprising:

providing the second group of documents together with an indication that the search query with the identified one term removed was used for the second search.

35. (New) The method of claim 32, further comprising:

providing a user with an option to be provided with the first group of documents when the first group of documents are determined not to be substantially similar to the second group of documents.

36. (New) The method of claim 32, where the determining whether the first group of documents is substantially similar to the second group of documents comprises at least one of:

comparing a word frequency of at least one word included in both the first and second groups of documents, or

determining a number of documents that are included in both the first and second groups of documents.

37. (New) The method of claim 1, where the context data includes documents, the comparing comprising at least one of:

comparing a word frequency in common with the first set of context data and the at least one second set of context data, or

determining a number of documents that are common to both the first set of context data and the at least one second set of context data.

38. (New) The method of claim 1, where the context data includes a list of categories, the comparing comprising at least one of:

determining a proportion of categories that are common to both the first set of context data and the at least one second set of context data, or

determining a proportion of categories that are common to both the first set of context data and the at least one second set of context data, where the categories are weighted based on relevance scores associated with the categories.